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INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 0924
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0326
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1031
RUEHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY 6935
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY 0491
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ASTANA 002457

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CASC](#) [MARR](#) [KCRM](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: FOLLOW-UP ON RAKHAT ALIYEV, PEACE
CORPS CASE, NORTHERN DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

REF: A. ASTANA 2450
[1](#)B. ASTANA 2410

Classified By: AMBASSADOR RICHARD E. HOAGLAND: 1.4 (B), (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Ambassador met with President Nursultan Nazarbayev's Foreign Policy Adviser Yerzhan Kazykhanov on December 12 on three current issues: the impact of exiled former son-in-law Rakhat Aliyev on the bilateral relationship, the need to move rapidly on TRANSCOM's Northern Distribution Network, and the Peace Corps volunteer currently under investigation for an alleged criminal act. END SUMMARY.

RAHKAT ALIYEV

[1](#)2. (S) The Ambassador told Kazykhanov, as he had told Head of the Presidential Administration Aslan Musin on December 10 (reftel A), the United States has no interest in Nazarbayev's exiled former son-in-law and former high official Rakhat Aliyev; we have no contact with him; we would not like to see him in the United States; we do not want to be involved in this affair. However, we would be interested to know the source of the information Musin said the Government of Kazakhstan has that Aliyev's lawyers are negotiating with the United States for citizenship or political asylum for Aliyev. The Ambassador said if the source of the information is a third country, we would consider it disinformation calculated to harm the U.S.-Kazakhstan bilateral relationship.

[1](#)3. (S) Kazykhanov replied that the Ambassador's message on Aliyev is clear, and President Nazarbayev was "very pleased" after Musin briefed him on the December 10 meeting: "There is no mistrust now in this particular sphere." Kazykhanov proffered that Kazakhstan's "source of information" is really just suspicion, the assumption that articles in Western media favoring Aliyev must be an attempt to lay the groundwork for his eventual request for political asylum. He quipped that Kazakhstan is "quite capable of making wrong assumptions on its own without help from the outside." Musin's staff are preparing a detailed file on Aliyev and his alleged crimes to deliver to the Embassy. (COMMENT: Even if Nazarbayev is supposedly satisfied that the United States has no interest in Aliyev, we are certain we have not heard the end of this issue. END COMMENT.)

NORTHERN DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

14. (SBU) The Ambassador previewed for Kazykhanov the diplomatic note that he planned to deliver to Security Council Deputy Secretary Abdirov later in the day relaying TRANSCOM's urgent request to use Kazakhstan's commercial transportation networks for a Northern Distribution Network (NDN) to provide non-lethal, non-military supplies to U.S. troops in Afghanistan. He noted that Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan are essentially on board, and that it is essential we receive Kazakhstan's approval as quickly as possible, preferably by a simple exchange of diplomatic notes.

15. (SBU) Kazykhanov said he understands both the value and urgency of an NDN and undertook to "talk to the right people" to push this forward. He said he suspects this can indeed be achieved simply by an exchange of diplomatic notes, commenting that a bilateral agreement would take too long and would need parliamentary approval.

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER INVESTIGATION

16. (C) Kazykhanov said he was unaware that a Peace Corps Volunteer in the town of Ridder is under investigation for trespassing at a restricted zinc mine and allegedly carrying industrial explosives (reftel B). The Ambassador summarized the case for him. He emphasized that he expects every U.S. citizen in Kazakhstan to obey the laws of the country; however, if the young man in question is guilty of anything

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it's of naivete and bad judgment. The Ambassador emphasized we fully agree with the Foreign Ministry that we want this handled quietly and kept out of the media. But the young man's parents are increasingly frustrated and have said they might contact U.S. journalists to publicize this case to try to speed its resolution. The Ambassador pressed that the investigation be completed quickly and that the young man be deported as soon as possible. (COMMENT: The Volunteer, at the end of his tour, was to have departed Kazakhstan on December 2. While he is not being detained, local authorities are holding his passport and not allowing him to travel while the investigation is on-going. END COMMENT.)

17. (C) Kazykhanov said he fully agreed that we do not want this incident to become a bilateral irritant. He said he would "talk around" to see what could be done to expedite the case and conclude it satisfactorily, but added he could make no promises at this point.
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